

161 In considering the causes of this decrease, there
 628 are found to be several reasons which may be cited. From the oldest times there have been many bloody battles fought with the Japanese. The warfare was continuous throughout the ages, as has been shown in a previous chapter. Then there were misunderstandings causing internecine strife with pitched battles. And so the people have naturally been bleeding to death. This clan antagonism has not yet quite died out, but has now become a very weak factor among them. Forty-five years ago, it was so strong that I was once refused hospitality in one district because I had come from another. I was speaking Ainu only and my dialect betrayed me. However, on my second visit some years later, all was well and I met with no trouble.

177 Then, there are now two and a half millions of
 161 Japanese here against about 15,000 Ainu. The former are pushing the people greatly, for the Ainu cannot compete with them. Next, they have had to come so

[262] suddenly from a meat and fish diet to a vegetarian one. This has told on their constitutions. There is
 161 too much blood-relationship among them, through in-
 [582] termarriage between people of their own village or district only. This has had a dire effect on them mentally. They have known nothing of medicine in general, and hygienic rules are nil. There has been a good

[165] deal of child mortality among them, and many of the
 842 women are sterile. Many people die of consumption.

• Their smoky dwellings are not fitted for the preservation of health. It is sad to see them becoming extinct, but it is inevitable. In them I think the Japanese are losing a great asset to the Empire. The numbers are now being kept up, as they have been for some time past, by adopting Japanese children and registering

[144] them as Ainu. And marriage with the Japanese themselves is taking not a few. There is an ever-increasing
 762] number now of half-breeds, and among those called

THE BIRTH TREE AND CHILD-BIRTH

191

"Oh no," said he, "not that; but as he has a new baby, he has to be very quiet for a time." "Well," I said, "that seems to me to be very funny. He ought really to be looking very spry and happy, but there he is as far down in the doldrums as it is possible for him to be. Why should he pretend to be ill?" 846

Said Penri, "Ah, you don't understand. He is following an old custom."

"What custom is it?" I asked, and he replied,

"As soon as it is definitely known that a baby is to be born, the prospective mother calls her husband and parents, tells them the happy news, and then makes them a feast. This ceremony is called *hon-o-inono-itak*, i.e. "prayer for the stomach." During the feast the two men make many fetishes of willow and offer them to the goddess of fire with much prayer, especially requesting that all may go on well. Then, when the birth has taken place, the father is sometimes called upon to stay at home wrapped up by the fire, as you saw, or to leave the house and go to stay with some friends for a time and keep very quiet as though he were ill for six days. He must stay in the hut all the time and rest by the fireside. This is called *yainunite*, i.e. 'taking good care of oneself.' And surely that is what I saw my friend doing, only he looked very miserable over it. 842 ● 846 844 846

"When a child is six days old," said the chief, "there is a function held called *po-o-inonna-itak*, i.e. "prayer for the child." On this occasion a small feast is prepared, of which the father, mother and grandparents only partake. At this time many fetishes are made and presented to the west-end doorway, one of whose special provinces it appears to be to watch over the birth and early years of children." I should have remarked above that during child-birth no man soever may be rightly allowed to come into or go out of a house by the west doorway. When necessary to go in or out, and should there be no door in the south wall, 852 [754] 844]

539 But one day the birds came and told me that a gentleman was coming from afar to pay me a visit.*

"In two days' time I heard the creaking of boat oars off the coast, and very soon recognized a sound of footsteps on the path, as of a man approaching. Almost immediately a gentleman clothed in a beautiful black robe came in and sat down close beside me. Upon seeing him I felt happy indeed! I thought immediately in my heart, 'I will marry this man. I will make him keep me.' So thought I. That selfsame day we were married, he and I. After that I lived in plenty as I had done before.

"When two years had elapsed, we found ourselves so pleased with one another that we decided to let the marriage stand for good.**

"We were both very powerful in magic and so had no children.†

"We grew to be very old and died without issue. Our two bodies died, but there was no burial. There is no trace of us in the underworld. We vanished quite away and there are no men and women to be found where we are gone. The true gods have sent us away.††

[825] *The man who placed the fur over his head was a metamorphosed bear. He was killed in combat with the trout, but now assumes the form of a man again and is about to marry the woman.

[583] **It was customary among this people to have a preliminary or temporary marriage, to see how the couple got on together, and then, if all was well, have a proper ceremonial marriage later, or, if not, to separate.

● [842] †It is said by the Ainu folk that people who were famous for their occult and magical powers seldom had any offspring.

††This means to say that the kingdom to which they went was the kingdom of the bears among the mountains.

582 out, destroyed by consumption, lunacy, and poverty of blood. All the members of one village are necessarily related to one another; and, as I have demonstrated in a previous chapter, [602] this is the main cause why certain diseases are common to one community and utterly unknown to others, and certain hereditary talents or tendencies are frequent in one village and imperceptible in the next.

831 The Ainu seem to have no Platonic love; their love is purely sexual. It is not to be wondered at, in a country where marital relations are so peculiar, that very little love is felt for children beyond a certain age. The mother suckles her own child usually for seven or eight months. She can bear children

844 till she is about thirty-five, though some who seem to be much older are still fruitful. It was difficult to ascertain this fact for no Ainu knows his own age. As far as I could learn fertility is neither hindered nor checked in any way—either by adopting a peculiar diet or by other practices. On the other hand, many a woman is sterile, and many are also affected with the most horrible of all diseases. I am inclined to think, however, that this special malady was imported to Yezo with Japanese civilisation, for it is in the more civilised parts of the Ainu country that it is most frequent.

165 There is probably no country in the world where there is so much loss of infant life due to want, accidents, and diseases, as with the Ainu. Abortion is common, owing to the severe exertion of the mother during pregnancy; and many a child dies not many days after birth for the same reason, and consequent disappearance of milk in the mother's breasts. The

[63] greater mortality of children, however, is between the age of six and ten. Only a small percentage of these poor creatures live to take part in the game of life; while many succumb to ill-treatment and the most horrible skin eruptions. Thus we have a good explanation of the frightful rapidity with which the Ainu race is fast disappearing. Naturally, those few who survive grow strong and healthy; but their great fondness for alcoholic drinks, which they can now so easily procure from the Japanese, destroys even them.

[373] [199] One is generally struck in Ainuland by the number of old 162 men and children, and by the almost entire lack of young fellows between the age of fifteen and thirty. This is due

THE KAMUI

which houses are built, and he is regarded as their owner and protector. His *ramat* has a resort in a cluster of *inau* called the soul *nusa* (*ram nusa*) just outside the sacred window.

We now come to the most trusted and revered *kamui* in the Ainu pantheon, Kamui Fuchi, Supreme Ancestress¹ and ruler of all departed spirits, whose *ramat* is manifested in the sacred fire of the hearth. She is also known as Abe Kamui, deity of fire, and shares with Shiramba Kamui the title of Owner of the World (Shiri-koro Kamui). Her supreme importance is seen in the fact that no *kamui* is approached for aid without preliminary prayer to her. In prayer or 'sacred talk' (*innono-itak*) she is addressed as Iresu Kamui—She Who Rears the Ainu. When a child dies before it is weaned its *ramat* is kept by Kamui Fuchi until it can be reborn. Most elderly Ainu still believe that generation is not caused by the act of sexual intercourse but that it is due to the return of a soul from the Underworld under proper auspices.

The hearth is the entrance to the abode of the dead. It is commonly believed that nothing must be allowed to contaminate it, and that no evil deed must be contemplated in Kamui Fuchi's presence. When the hearth fire is covered with ashes at night—it is never extinguished—Kamui Fuchi is supposed to retire to rest. She never leaves the hearth, but orders other *kamui* to deputize for her outside. When, as in childbirth, there is impurity within the house a second fire is made at the lower end of the hearth, and Uari Kamui, as substitute for Kamui Fuchi, takes charge there.

It was Kamui Fuchi who gave the Ainu women instructions to make the sacred girdles (see Chapter XII).

There are various accounts of her origin. According to one she descended from the heavens and was accompanied by Kanna Kamui, the god of thunder and lightning, in his guise of a fiery serpent. This god is represented by Kinashut Kamui, with whom Kamui Fuchi is closely connected in ritual. According to another

¹ *Ehashi, Fuchi*: There is some ambiguity in the translation of these two words. The former usually means elder, and implies respect. It is translated as such in this book when it applies to a living man, but when applied to a deceased person or to a *kamui* Munro considers it to mean ancestor and to imply ancestor worship. In the same way, *Fuchi* means old woman or grandmother. As Kamui Fuchi is regarded as the ancestress by all Ainu women, Munro refers to her frequently as 'Supreme Ancestress'. Mr Watanabe criticizes Munro's use of *ehashi* and *fuchi* as ancestor and ancestress.—B.Z.S.

THE KAMUI

Closely associated with this deity is Kinashut Kamui, the spirit chief of the snakes, whom we have just mentioned in connection with Kamui Fuchi. Christian Ainu may, as Batchelor suggests, have expressed the view that the snake is the source of all evil, but it is not the view of the heathen Ainu. Kinashut Kamui is usually accepted as a *pase kamui* (weighty, or important *kamui*); he is identified by some elders with Nusa-koro Kamui, and by others is regarded as his coadjutor or his brother. Like him he is sometimes addressed as Kamui Ekashi (Sacred Ancestor), and like him he may, as protector of the village precincts, be invoked to ward off a typhoid epidemic.¹ As we shall see later, his image in snake form is used in various rites of exorcism. [776 825] [782 789]

In prayer for succour, in illness or other troubles, the first to be besought is, as always, Kamui Fuchi, and the next Nusa-koro Kamui. In many cases Kinashut Kamui is also besought with the consent of his 'co-dweller'. In difficult childbirth and various diseases Kinashut Kamui is invoked as a healing deity, and is then addressed as Shiturupakpe Kamui Ekashi. [776 782]

The meaning of the word *kinashut* is uncertain, but living snakes are often referred to as Kinashut Kamui. Snakes are said to be rancorous and revengeful when killed or injured, even accidentally, and their *ramat*, considered evil, is then apt to take malicious possession of people. In such cases the *ramat* of Kinashut Kamui himself is solicited to oust the intruder. [776 825] [774 787]

In most parts of the Hokkaido Nusa-koro Kamui and Kinashut Kamui share a *nusa* called the chaff-thrown (*murukuta*) *nusa* because the husks of millet are thrown there and form a heap. The millet, with other food, is kept in an elevated storehouse. Snakes breed in the heap and frequent the storehouse where rats breed, and they eat the young rats. This may have contributed to the reluctance to kill snakes, but there are deeper causes, and belief in their mysterious powers includes a phallic element. I have not found a belief that women are fertilized by snakes when passing graves, but young women were cautioned not to sleep while on the hills lest they became pregnant by a snake. [776 825] [778 778] [842] ●

A full description of the different *inau* and their arrangement in [776 778 782]

¹ In a note on the treatment of disease, received only in 1960, Munro states that this title: Kotan koresu, Moshiri koresu, Kamui Ekashi, 'Divine ancestor who rears the *kotan*', is a name too sacred for ordinary use and is invoked only in prayer to Kinashut Kamui in dire necessity. A snake skin found in the granary is regarded as a talisman.—B.Z.S. [552]

THE KAMUI

776 the *nusa* along the *inau* fences outside the east window will be given
 782 in the next chapter. Here it must be noted that the *nusa* referred
 778 to above stands apart from the others. The soul *nusa* of Shiramba
 Kamui comes next, and then the *nusa* of a feminine deity of the
 chase whose epithet is Hash-inau-uk Kamui, 'she who takes the
 hash [bush] *inau*'. Some elders have an esoteric name for this deity
 776 based on an old and interesting myth in which she appears as Niso-
 [777] sange Mat, the woman descended from the *niso*, that is the under-
 [372] piece of the wooden fire-drill. By the seashore she performs some
 protective function in connection with fishing, but inland, as a
 relative and assistant of Shiramba Kamui, she gives aid against the
 prowling evil spirits of the woods and hills. She not only protects
 the hunter but guides him to success in the chase. She is sometimes
 [842] solicited by barren women and is said to have appeared in visions
 [787] with an infant on her back.

Next to her *nusa*, and often continuous with it, is a fence along
 [782] which are arranged *inau* offered to various *kamui*, and which is
 [778] called *inau chipa*. These *kamui* will be referred to when we come to
 the ceremony of the house-warming but mention should be made
 here of Wakka-ush Kamui, also called Pet-orun (in the river)
 Kamui, who resides in or pervades water. This deity, usually
 [782] regarded as male but sometimes as female, receives almost the
 [769] same *inau* as Nusa-koro Kamui, and like him is associated with
 [778] ancestor worship. A female manifestation of Wakka-ush Kamui is
 Nai-orun Kamui, who presides over springs and pools which
 appear in small valleys. Like Nusa-koro Kamui and Kinashut
 [844] Kamui, Wakka-ush Kamui is besought in difficult childbirth. All
 the above *kamui* are usually revered as *pase kamui*.

776 There are a number of water spirits, regarded as assistants to or
 representatives of Wakka-ush Kamui, who occupy special positions
 823 in the river. Chiu-rape Guru and his spouse Chiu-rape Mat control
 the undercurrent, and Chi-wash Kamui the waters at the mouth of
 the river. Also esteemed are Chu-roro Guru (where the river flows
 deeply above rapids), Pan-utka-ush Guru (in the rapids), Chiu-
 rang Guru (in the waterfall), Hattar-koro Kamui (in the greatest
 depths), Ru-esan-koro Guru (in the lower reaches), and Chiwash-
 koro Kamui (who possesses the surf (wash) at a river mouth).
 Though the Ainu wash but little they use much water in ritual,
 and this may explain the multiplicity of water spirits.

776 We now come to the third class of *kamui* which I have called
 [782]

XI

DEATH AND BURIAL

THE SPIRITS of the virtuous dead go to the Underworld, but those of evil persons suffer in the Wet Underworld (*Teine Pokna Moshiri*).¹ There is only a limited belief in reincarnation; a few exceptionally good and gifted men are said to be granted rebirth, and an infant dying unweaned remains in the care of Kamui Fuchi until it can be reborn in the womb of its mother.² Except in the case of old people who have lived a full life and left descendants, death is believed to be due not to natural causes but to the action of evil spirits. Kamui Fuchi and the other *kamui* whose protection is sought throughout life are not blamed for death. 775

When a sick person is delirious, with staring eyes, plucking fingers or clenched hands, the presence of an evil spirit is suspected and purification is performed. When the sufferer becomes unconscious, an elder would say a prayer to Kamui Fuchi. This, the 'self word last said' (*yai ye kesui itak*) may represent a prayer by, as much as for, the dying. 763 [776] [761] [782]

¹ The spirit of a deceased person arrives first at a spot in the Underworld (*Pokna Moshiri*) where the road forks. One fork leads to the village of the deities (*Kamui Kotan*), the destination of the good, and the other to the Wet Underworld (*Teine Pokna Moshiri*), the destination of the bad. The spirit is led to one of these two by a dog which is under the direction of Kamui Fuchi (Batchelor, *The Ainu and their Folk-lore*, London, 1901, and *Materials for Summarised Ethnography of Eastern Asiatic Peoples*, Vol. 2, *The Ainu*, Tokyo, 1944).—H.W.

² Munro states that the Ainu did not believe sexual intercourse to be the direct cause of pregnancy, but that it opened the door to the return of a departed soul. However, if such a belief were general it would be in contradistinction to the statement above, that only certain exceptional people experienced reincarnation. It is probable that either or both beliefs were held partially.—B.Z.S. [842]

/764 cont. /

844 The birth pangs start with the Ainu women long before the actual confinement and are very obstinate. A confinement is
 [845] only considered difficult if birth does not take place till the fifth day after the first pains.

844 The midwife speaks the following words in taking up the
 789 child: "Asiri ciacia inankarachty," which means, "new old
 769 man, be healthy"! When a girl has been born she says pachko
 instead of ciacia, /765/ meaning "little old woman." The
 Ainu believe that their children are sent to them from the be-
 yond by deceased relatives, who live there in the same con-
 ditions as the inhabitants of the earth. For that reason a mother
 takes her child up in her arms as quickly as possible after its
 umbilical cord has been cut with a knife, and says: "A! Aino!
vok erambotara-anachci ne nanko!" meaning, "Look, people,
 how disturbed they are!" That is, those who have sent the child
 to earth now remember this and are worried whether it has
 weathered its journey safely.

844 The Ainu do not hide anything from their children who
 [864] know exactly how childbirth takes place. For that reason it is unnecessary to lie to them later concerning the arrival of a new brother or sister.

Behavior of the Man. —

The husband of a prospective mother has to take the place of the midwife whenever the latter does not turn up on time or when the confinement becomes too protracted.

844 The husband of the woman in childbirth helps her in many
 778 cases personally, as do the other men in the house. When the
 782 woman moans they place in one corner of the hearth a little
 789 stick whose surface has been carved with a knife. This little stick is called inau by the Ainu and signifies a sacrifice to the gods, in this case the goddess of fire. For it is this one among all the gods who maintains the best relations with man, and she can, when she wants to, always be of help to man. The men also clasp a string around the suffering woman just below the chest. This string is twisted out of long willow chips and is called cinoje inau, that is, "twisted inau"; it is often used as a

/765 cont. /

844 remedy for all severe pains. If, despite all this, birth still does
778 not ensue, another sacrifice is made to the goddess of fire by
782 the elders of the house. A small inau is placed in the middle
789 of the hearth amidst burning logs, and as it is gradually con-
[55] sumed by the flames, an old man sitting on a little mat in front
of the fire whispers a soft prayer improvised especially for the
occasion. If the glowing stick falls over in the direction of the
[787] praying man, this is regarded as an indication that the prayer
has been heard and that the woman will soon be relieved of
her pains.

844 On the day of birth a husband usually does not work, but
not because of some superstitious regulation; rather, he does
it from sympathy and sorrow for his wife's suffering. He is also
highly interested to see whether his ancestors presented him with
a son or a daughter. He asks the midwife about this, and she
answers laconically with ochkajko (man) or machneku (woman).
I should mention, however, that the Ainu by no means have a
[842] special preference for offspring of a certain sex. I have, it is
true, heard repeatedly that a father wished for a boy, yet it
never occurred, to my knowledge, that one of the parents or of
the relatives expressed himself with disgust or anger at the birth
846 of a girl. If the husband of the woman in childbed has an urgent
business affair of some sort which cannot be put off under any
circumstances, he may leave his wife and the newborn baby as
early as the following day after the birth, but only, of course,
if the health of both mother and child is satisfactory and there
is no more danger to be feared.

846 /766/ On the first day of joy for the parents the husband
574 takes part in the festival arranged in honor of the birth. Most
852 of all, they throw wild garlic (Alium victorale) into the fire.
[824] This plant is considered the favorite food of the gods and the
[776] Ainu believe that they can force the gods to take part in the
[782] festival by throwing it into the fire. Rice is also cooked with
[262] garlic, and made into a very rare and tasty dish. All neighbors
[758] are invited to the feast. These come quietly and are careful

/769 cont./

843 her relatives about it, no miscarriage will take place.

753 2. If the woman falls during her pregnancy and receives a severe shaking, miscarriage will occur.

843 After seven lunar months of pregnancy the woman should
733 avoid frequent intercourse with her husband since during this time the male semen might get into the eyes and mouth of the fetus, and the child would thus see badly. They tell of newborn children who have so much white slime in their mouth [845] which, like male semen, is called (owembo), that it cannot be removed fast enough from their mouth and they die by suffocating from it.

846 Following parturition intercourse is not allowed for from
833 30 to 40 days.

• 842 A typical idea of the Ainu is that conception is not brought about by having intercourse just once or twice. The child, they think, is the fruit of repeated coitus, and for that reason [836] it is considered harmless by the Ainu women to yield to a man once or twice. They only fear the consequences of an extended love affair.

847 Among the Ainu, much more frequently than among the
171 Gilyak, miscarriages are induced artificially. The life of the
843] latter is much more normal in the framework of traditional customs, whereas that of the Ainu on Sakhalin Island has been influenced for two centuries by a powerful external factor, that of the Japanese. These interfere to an enormous extent in the life of the Ainu, they change it and import elements that are not exactly instrumental in furthering culture. Especially the women stand under the influence of foreign men who are only interested in satisfying their sexual urge. Hence stems the large number of secret affairs that Ainu women have [548] with foreigners, and it gives rise to the type of women who are given to an only slightly veiled form of prostitution. In both cases they purposely avoid pregnancy and apply all methods to remove it in case it accidentally occurs.

847 The most commonly used method for this, long known to Ainu women, is pressing the abdomen with the hands or some

/770 cont. /

847 told me about it did not know its name. I was not so well ac-
[184] quainted with the women of these regions that I could have
openly discussed such a delicate topic with them.

Artificial abortions were, according to what the old Ainu
tell, already known in the distant past, since girls enjoyed
[83] absolute freedom in sexual intercourse, but were ashamed, or
refused, to bear children before marriage. It is possible that at
that time other means were also used to get rid of the fetus.

847 , Now the women use primarily Japanese methods, which
177 are being introduced by the workers and officials of the fisheries
that are spread over the entire southern coast of Sakhalin Island.
But I was unable to find out anything concerning these methods
from the fishermen whom I questioned. Perhaps I encountered
people who really had no conception of these matters. Or they
probably avoided discussing them with me on purpose since they

[648] knew that the new Japanese penal law prosecutes severely all
manipulations that are designed to decrease the birthrate. I
learned, however, from a more intelligent Japanese, that

[821] saffron, which grows wild on Hokkaido Island, is regarded as a
very sure remedy. It is highly probable that in Japan many
methods are used, in view of the fact that in that country the
custom of preventing and interrupting pregnancy is very wide-
spread. Even the Ainu women believe in these sisiam kusuri
(Japanese remedies), but they seldom betray their secret which
they received on the condition of silence.

845 Twin births. Among the Ainu the birth of twins has the
847 same superstition attached to it as among the Gilyak. One of
[842] the two is considered of definite diabolic descent since in their
opinion man can only fertilize a woman with one child. Such
an attitude to two simultaneously born children might lead one
to suspect that the Ainu would try to rid themselves of the
diabolic breed. I was however unable to find any basis for the
suspicion that they have the custom of killing one of the twins.
On the other hand, in the book of a Russian traveller of the be-
ginning of the 19th century, Krashennnikov, such a custom is
mentioned, though, in fact, as being current with the Ainu of

/771 cont. /

845 from the inau, two little dolls or rather wooden sticks to the
 782 wall, which are meant to represent the twins. This inau is re-
 778 newed every time the old ashes are removed from the yurt,
 184 whereupon they sacrifice to almost all the gods. In the house
 789 of one Ainu who inhabited the northern most village of Taraika
 I saw talismans that had the purpose of preventing the recurrence
 of a twin birth.

845 /772/ The Ainu avoid women who have borne twins to the
 same degree as they shrink from twins themselves. They fear
 that from them the fatal qualities might be transferred to others.
 In this respect their views are quite different, though, from
 [171] those of the Gilyak. For they consider soft objects such as
 household objects of sea weed and articles of clothing as being
 not so harmful as metal objects or had things in general.

• 842 Sterility. The Ainu believe that a grown-up person can
 789 transfer his properties to another. Thus a sterile woman, for
 instance, will buy various appliances made by a woman with
 many children. She will use these constantly and she will
 probably also carry smaller objects on her person. As a good
 remedy they also give a sterile woman a potion which consists
 of nothing else but water in which the leather end of a prolific
 woman's girdle has been boiled. There is also a widespread
 belief that a sterile woman can be cured if she sits down with
 her bare buttocks on the just extruded placenta of a woman who
 has given birth to a child. Some men told me of yet another
 remedy. The husband of a childless woman lays, without her
 knowing it, a wooden knife under her pillow which must resemble
 a real knife exactly. If in a year's time the desired effect has
 [595] not taken place, the man takes another, younger wife in order
 to obtain from her the coveted offspring.

842 But it is seldom that the Ainu ascribe the fault of childless-
 826 ness exclusively to the woman. There is rather the general
 view, that this depends on both mates, or really on their blood
 which may be hard or soft. If both mates have soft blood
 they will have a child born to them in the first or second year
 of their living together. If the blood of one of the mates is

/772 cont./

842 hard it will be several years before they can have children. If
826 both mates have hard blood they are condemned to childless-
ness, and nothing can help them, not even the cures mentioned
above. It is significant that in this case they are not permitted
[756] to turn to the shamans for help. These would definitely refuse
to trouble the gods with such unclean affairs (ciachkire oruspe).

842 Sterility is not, however, something that should be punished
597 with contempt. A childless family usually adopts a child from
538 relatives. In the Ainu sagas and fairy tales it often happens
that brave heroes who have always been successful in life and
who have obtained a beautiful wife through great dangers and
exertion, remain childless just because they were so powerful
(we-nupuru). For children are ordinarily born only to the
weaker (we cian) heroes of Ainu folklore.

841 Women who have no menstruation are recognized as sterile.
834 These are the so-called "pure" who are designated by the Ainu
589 as kijesach machneku (that is, "bloodless"). These girls are
strictly forbidden to have sexual intercourse with men, since
they might by this find immediate death. Not long after my
arrival among the Ainu /773/ a woman who had preserved her
innocence till late in life, died. She had shamanic tendencies
[756] and had for a long time been a shaman, from which can be
deduced that she had a more tender and more receptive nervous
system than the other girls. Among the Ainu can be found
women with whom menstruation stops in youth. These women
are condemned to complete sexual abstinence. A woman was
pointed out to me who, though she lived together with an old
man and was considered his wife, slept apart from him for the
above mentioned reason. This had been going on for many
years.

886 Menstruation. The Ainu know that when menstruation
145 ceases that period of life begins for the woman when she is no
longer capable of being fertilized. They were, however, un-
able to give me the average age at which this occurs. The
Russian doctor N. Kirilov calculates this age to be 40 years.